

DATE: November 22, 2010

TO: RMC Governing Board

FROM: Belinda V. Faustinos, Executive Officer

SUBJECT: Item 10: Project and Liaison Activities

Bureau Land of Management; Land Management Plan: The Bureau of Land Management is currently revising the South Coast Resource Management Plan. Additionally, the RMC Board authorized a memorandum of understanding with BLM for RMC participation in the Plan revision. An administrative draft of the South Coast Resource Management Plan was circulated in May 2009 and comments were received from different agencies and it has been sent to the State Office and is pending the Washington Office review. The public review process has been delayed due to other priorities in the BLM office.

Compton Creek Watershed Activities: The Compton Creek Daylighting Study has recently been completed and will be circulated to relevant stakeholders including the office of Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas (2nd District), Coastal Conservancy, City of Compton, and Task Force participants. The RMC provided a grant in the amount of \$192,000 to the LA & San Gabriel Rivers Watershed Council and includes designs and engineering estimates for 4 sites located within the Compton Creek Watershed. RMC Staff continue to participate in the Compton Creek Task Force and coordinate efforts with the County of Los Angeles Office of Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas (2nd District) on the Compton Creek Ecosystem Restoration and Implementation Plan. RMC Staff is also collaborating with the State Coastal Conservancy to identify projects within the Compton Creek watershed that can be jointly funded.

Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Plan: The RMC and WCA continue to be very involved in these efforts both at the sub regional level and the Leadership Committee in addition to chairing the Disadvantaged Communities (DAC) Ad Hoc Committee. Through a sub-region based process the Leadership Committee recently prioritized a slate of projects for the next round of project implementation funding from Proposition 84. A planning grant application was also submitted on behalf of the region to update the adopted plan.

Los Angeles & San Gabriel Rivers Watershed Council (Watershed Council): The Watershed Council continues to provide a wide range of watershed improvement services including implementation of a major water augmentation and water quality demonstration project in the City of Los Angeles, Elmer Street which was recently completed. They now have 12 employees funded through a variety of sources working in native landscaping, Compton Creek watershed, water quality testing, watershed coordination, DAC Outreach, Quarterly Symposia etc. in the watershed. A planning team recently worked on evaluating key messages for the entity through a service grant from the Taproot Foundation. Most recently, your Executive Officer was elected as Secretary and therefore now sits on the Executive Committee.

National Park Service (NPS) San Gabriel River Watershed Special Resource Study (San Gabriel SRS): NPS Staff met with the stakeholder agencies with the initial elements of the draft report earlier this year and received additional comments. The next steps for the NPS staff on this special resource study are as follows: 1. To complete a draft report. The draft report is expected to be completed for review in Spring of 2011

2. After stakeholder review of the report, a final report will be completed for presentation to Congress in fall 2011. More information is available at <http://www.nps.gov/pwro/sangabriel>.

San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments Energy, Environment and Natural Resources Committee (EENR Committee): The EENR Committee meets on a monthly basis and staff participates as a non-voting member. The voting members are Mary Ann Lutz, Chair (Monrovia), Denis Bertone, Vice-Chair (San Dimas) and Sam Pedroza, Member (Claremont). There are five working groups for the EENR Committee: Air, Energy, Open Space, Solid Waste and Water. An agency representative also participates in the monthly Water Resources working group meetings.

Upper Santa Clara River: The RMC Board approved funding for acquisition of several parcels located within the Soledad Canyon CAPP Acquisition project and was recently authorized to restart and acquire the property. The acquisition was completed in October 2010. Additionally, the Santa Clara Valley Conservation Alliance (SCVCA) was formed to explore funding opportunities for acquisitions within the CAPP. Currently the SCVCA is working on the several acquisitions, but are pending due to lack of funding.

Upper Santa Clara River IRWMP: Meets quarterly and seeks a balanced approach to managing the water resources that are reflective of the region's interests. The overall general will of the public, elected representatives, and government, is to manage the watershed in a responsible manner that balances growth, economics, and natural resources. The Upper SCR IRWMP stakeholder group is one venue where all sides on these issues can work together to define common goals and objectives in the watershed and prioritize implementation programs to reach those goals/objectives and within those parameters, all input from parties with diverse views regarding growth are welcomed. The Upper SCR IRWMP submitted their Regional Acceptance Process (RAP) and was approved by the Department of Water Resources. Currently Upper SCR IRWMP is developing a program to prioritize funding and developing final guidelines for Prop 84 grants. The Upper SCR IRWMP is evaluating potential grant applications from stakeholders and implementing a watershed coordinator position for the purpose of developing, implementing and preparing grant applications for Prop 84 competitive grants.

WATERSHED CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Duck Farm Project: Phase 1A project development activity has resumed with limited bond funds approved for this purpose. AECOM has completed 100% Construction Documents for Step 1 of Phase 1A Supplemental Environmental Program (SEP) and Infrastructure. All LA County Flood and Southern California Edison (SCE) plan reviews are complete. Construction contract for Step 1 was bid and awarded to the successful lowest responsible bidder and within the allotted budget value available for the work. Permits for demolition are in process with work scheduled to start November 22, 2010. Target completion date for Step 1 Construction is April 1, 2011. Tasks to be completed include infrastructure improvements, irrigation and planting of native plants within the riparian zone associated with SEP and interior decomposed granite pedestrian trail loop. SCE work to underground 66kV line remains pending. Water source connection for the project will come from San Gabriel Valley Water Company as investigation into options to draw well water did not prove feasible at this time due to continued presence of perchlorate plume.

Emerald Necklace: The Emerald Necklace is a vision for a 17 mile loop of parks and greenways connecting 10 cities and nearly 500,000 residents along the Río Hondo and San Gabriel Rivers. Since its inception, a number of stakeholders have developed numerous projects and activities that help accomplish this vision.

In order to better coordinate and facilitate both projects and activities along the Emerald Necklace, staff participates in monthly coordinating meetings with Supervisor District 1 staff and other stakeholders. The WCA approved a contract at the September meeting of the WCA with the understanding that all agreements with funders must be in place before contract begins. Staff expects to bring an agreement with the California Community Foundation to the December WCA meeting.

River Wilderness Park Project: The first piece of the River Wilderness Park was acquired in early 2006 with the Canyon Inn purchase in late 2008. In its efforts to work on the implementation of the El Encanto Master Plan, BlueGreen was selected as the consultant team that will carry out the design development for the Special Use area. They are underway with the work. The WCA has also started the Canyon Inn Planning and Feasibility Study for the Bike Path Extension. Withers & Sandgren have been selected to do this work.

South Gate Habitat Restoration Project: The RMC staff is coordinating with the Watershed Conservation Authority and Northeast Trees for the completion of the design and construction documents for this project. The WCA approved the receipt of \$1.5 million in Proposition A funding provided by the LA County Parks and Open Space District, Excess Funding. The construction documents are 90% complete waiting for comments from LA County Public Works. The proposed project consists of habitat restoration of a 7.6 acre vacant property located north of Imperial Highway, between the 710 Freeway and the Los Angeles River, with access to the LA River bike path.

Upper San Gabriel & Rio Hondo Watershed Coordinator Program: The Watershed Coordinators and Watershed Conservation Authority held the second Emerald Necklace Beautification Day, this time at Bosque del Rio Hondo within the Whittier Narrows on October 30th. This event was in partnership with the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority and the San Gabriel Valley Conservation Corps. Despite early morning rain the event had great success with approximately 40 volunteers including the El Monte High School Environmental Club. The volunteers successfully filled a three cubic yard bin with trash removed from the river and the adjacent floodplain.

Other Watershed Coordinator activities include identification of potential trail connection along the San Jose Creek, assisting/supporting the City of Azusa and California Resources Connection (CRC), a 501c3 non-profit, in the development of the Memorial Park Community Garden, and development of open space planning tools for a better understanding of current public/private land holdings, potential acquisitions, and funding mechanisms through collaboration with local open space stakeholders.

Walnut Creek Habitat & Open Space: Walnut Creek Open Space was acquired in October 2008 and the process of initiating planning for the site has been restarted. The City of San Dimas has completed an initial analysis of the utilities connections and easements along with the potential trail connections to the Antonovich Trail. A plumbing company has been brought in to finalize the maps of the gas and water lines on the property.

Whittier Narrows Plan Update: The Whittier Narrows Plan Update draft Final Report as well as the Draft EIR has been released for public comment, the comment period on both documents ends December 22, 2010. The information in the draft plan has been incorporated in the Army Corps of Engineers update of the Master plan for the Whittier Narrows Basin. The WCA is expecting to complete this process in the Spring of 2011.

SAN GABRIEL RIVER DISCOVERY CENTER AUTHORITY

On January 20, 2010 the Authority certified the Final Environmental Impact Report for the Discovery Center; also approved at this meeting was the first alternative of the project a 14,000 square foot (sf) building. The NEPA findings were approved at the April 2010 board meeting. A lawsuit was filed by the Friends of the Whittier Narrows Natural Area and the Authority's in house legal counsel and CEQA legal counsel are providing support to the Authority on this matter. Staff has applied for a \$7 million grant from the State Parks Nature Education Facilities Program. The schematic design update for the 14,000 SF building has been completed and will be presented to the SGRDCA Board at the September meeting. A recent victory was endorsement of the project by the Editorial Board of the San Gabriel Valley Tribune.

LOS CERRITOS WETLANDS AUTHORITY

Activities regarding acquisition of the Hellman 100 acres site in Seal Beach have re-started. The Wildlife Conservation Board approved a \$5.2 million dollar grant to the LCWA for acquisition of the Hellman Properties. LCWA completed the updated appraisal report for the Hellman Properties and received approval of the appraisal report from the Department of General Services on February 2009. The Purchase and Sale Agreement and Pollution Legal Liability are being finalized and the documents to purchase the property are ready and acquisition of the property is tentatively scheduled for winter of 2010.

LCWA is currently working with its partners, El Dorado Audubon, Aquarium of the Pacific, Save Our Beach and Los Cerritos Wetlands Stewards to implement the Los Cerritos Wetlands Stewardship Program (LCWSP). Additionally the LCWA has secured funding from the 2009/2010 California Coastal Commission Whale Tail Grant to continue the LCWSP and through US Fish and Wildlife Services to restore Zelder Marsh and the LCWSP newsletter is attached.

The Los Cerritos Wetlands Stewards and Tidal Influence managed and completed the first ever stewardship grant funded through the SCWRP Community Wetland Restoration Grant Program. The SCWRP grant allowed for the LCWSP to grow quickly and during its expanse, further the LCWSP accomplished more than it first anticipated when the grant was awarded. The LCWSP kicked-off with the *4th Annual Joy Zedler Marsh Coastal Clean-Up Day* on September 19, 2009 and since then we have had 44 public events and have hosted the Aquarium of the Pacific the first Saturday of each month and recently ended our performance period with the 5th Annual Zedler Marsh Coastal Clean-Up Day and the first ever Los Cerritos Wetlands habitat planting on 10/10/10.

In total the LCWSP attracted over 963 volunteers since September 19, 2009 and volunteers have worked more than 1,926 hours. Volunteers from CSULB Department of Biological Sciences and Environmental Science and Policy Program were heavily involved and have been performing ecological and geological surveys within the LCWA's properties to best inform restoration activities. The LCWA participated in the 'Disney Give a Day Get A Day' promotion which attracted brand new demographics of volunteers to Los Cerritos Wetlands. The LCWA partnership with Signal Hill Petroleum Inc. continues to grow as they have provided the LCWA with 4 disposal bins, covered the cost of debris disposal, promoted outreach, and provided portable restrooms for the LCWA events as well as an irrigation hub.

Los Cerritos Wetlands Stewardship Program Sept – Dec 2010

Presented by



Los Cerritos Wetlands Authority

Participate in the ecological restoration of Los Cerritos Wetlands that starts this fall with the first ever salt marsh planting of these wetlands at Zedler Marsh

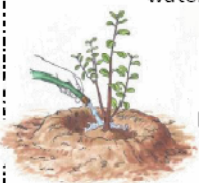
Los Cerritos Wetlands occupy habitat in two cities & two counties. Our restoration program is unprecedented & focused on restoring & documenting 66 acres of wetlands currently owned by Los Cerritos Wetlands Authority. There are various restorations in the wetlands & different meeting points based on the activity (see map on opposite side). We provide service-learning credits at all events. Please contact us if you need further directions or have any questions. The wetlands are wildlands; please dress accordingly for all events. Closed toed shoes required. In our effort for conservation, we will provide water, but all events are water-bottle free events. We encourage reusable water containers.

Children under 14 must be accompanied by an adult.
For questions contact: Eric Zahn, Program Coordinator

Eric@TidalInfluence.com or 858-353-6113 (cell)

Or check our websites:

lcwetlands.org, lcstewards.org, saveourbeach.org



Upcoming Public Events

5th Annual Zedler Marsh Clean-Up
Sat, Sept. 25th 'Coastal Clean-Up Day'
1:00pm-3:00pm – RSVP required

Monthly Trash Cleanups:

Save Our Beach hosts our wetlands trash cleanups
9:00am-11:00am on the 2nd Friday of each month.
Meet at the corner of 1st & PCH in Seal Beach.
Upcoming dates: Fri. Sept10, Oct8, Nov12, Dec10

Monthly Habitat Restorations:

LCW Stewards & Aquarium of the Pacific sponsor our
Zedler Marsh restoration planting events
10am-Noon on the 1st Saturday of each month .
Meet at the corner of Studebaker Rd. & 2nd St .
Upcoming dates: Sat. Sept 4th, Oct 2nd, Nov 6th, Dec 4th

Have a group of 10-20 people that want to do a special
planting event on a different date?
Contact us to book a private restoration event!!

Regular Bird Walks

El Dorado Audubon hosts Hellman Ranch bird walks
8am – 9:15am on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays.
Meet at the corner of 1st & PCH in Seal Beach
Contact eldoradaudubon@yahoo.com to participate
Upcoming dates: Wed. Sept 8, Sept 22, Oct 13, Oct 27,
Nov 10, Nov 24, Dec 8

Thanks to Our Partners in Conservation:





Volunteers planting the banks of Zedler Marsh



Volunteers learning about coastal wetlands and types of habitats at Zedler Marsh



10/10/10 Get to Work Planting Day



Volunteers "Get to Work Planting Day" by making "seed balls"...mud filled with seeds, rolled into balls and then thrown into the marsh.